

**RUSA President's Annual Report to  
ALA Council  
June 2024  
Joseph Yue, RUSA President 2023-2024**

RUSA focused on strengthening infrastructure in 2023-2024 in addition to successful professional development offering through Virtual and online courses and webinar. We also put effort in communicating with our members and foster focused discussions among elected and appointed leaders within the division at our board meetings.

### **Our Mission**

The Reference and User Services Association is a network to educate, empower, and inspire its members to advance the evolution of the profession and better serve users in a continuously changing information society.

### **Highlights**

Three task forces were formed to investigate how to carry out initiatives of importance to the division. They are publishing book and media reviews that used to be part of the division journal, sponsorship and fundraising and communications.

#### **Communications**

A task force was setup to look into division's needs to communicate with external audience. This is in part to gain a better understanding what are the opportunities and mechanisms available to the division as it is not likely we can hire a marketing specialist for RUSA office in the near future.

#### **Sponsorship and Fundraising**

Our division currently does not have a coordinated approach to sponsorship and fundraising activities. We setup a task force to look into what is needed for the division to diversify revenue streams beyond membership due and continual education opportunities. We also hope to be ready as further rollout of ALA 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary fundraising effort.

#### **Publishing**

An editorial board was formed for the revived journal with a slight name change. It will be called RUSQ: A Journal of Reference and User Experience. The current editor-in-chief mentioned they have received a few manuscripts for the inaugural issue and are on track to publish the first issue later this year.

A task force was formed to look at the viability of publishing book and media reviews separately on a cost neutral basis. The current journal hosting platform offered by ALA lack ads server functionality. As open access publication is not free, we need more robust support from ALA to look into advertising as a viable revenue stream, not just for RUSA but for other units that publish journals within the association.

### Communication across the Division

In order to promote information sharing across the division, we have sent out weekly update to our membership this year. These updates not only share information about division level news but also gather input from members through surveys. Sections and interest groups are also featured so members who do not belong to any of these sections or interest groups are aware of opportunities available to them.

To enhance committee volunteers and leaders' experience within RUSA, we offered all units within the division access to RUSA office managed Google Drive. Based on feedback gathered recently, it was considered a positive development. Our archivist will make mid-year and final unit reports accessible via the institutional repository starting this year. Hopefully this will enhance volunteer experience in the near future.

Highlights from selected division level committees:

### Membership Engagement Committee

Chaired by two capable leaders, our Membership Engagement Committee embarked on various projects to look at membership recruitment and retention. They also offered a series Trivia Break for members. They also provide programming to help engage attendees at our upcoming Coffee and Conversation that will be held during Annual Conference this year.

### Professional Resources Committee

As pointed out in the survey commissioned by ALA, membership values standards and guidelines. This is our second to the last year to bringing all guidelines and best practices up-to-date. A task force was appointed to work on Professional Competencies for Reference and User Services Librarians through the end of this year. We received quite many volunteers and was glad to report that we were able to have members from diverse professional background.

### Professional Development Committee

While we held mostly steady this year, we would be offering a free webinar to members on how to convert an idea or their expertise to promising RUSA Webinar and Courses. We are hoping this will tap into rich resources we have among our membership. Our Virtual Forum this year Reference Revolution: AI + More was quite successful despite availability of other free virtual conferences on AI in the libraries.

### Awards Coordinating Committee

To promote equity and transparency, our Awards Coordinating Committee embark on a review of awards, scholarship and grants selection panel's manual and documentation in order to streamline and provide easy access to relevant information for our award programs. They also work in coordination with our Collection Development and Evaluation Section, home of many books and media award, on their selection panel documentation.

## **RUSA Sections and Interest Groups**

RUSA's strength is with our six sections. Many of our members identify to the section they are active in first before the division. The sections are Business Reference and Services Section (BRASS), Collection Development and Evaluation Section (CODES), Emerging Technologies Section (ETS), History Section (HS), Reference Services Section (RSS), and Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section (STARS). RUSA is also home to five active Interest Groups: Federal and Armed Forces Libraries (FAFLIG), Financial Literacy (FLIG), First Year Experience (FYE), Physical Deliver Interest Group and Shared Collections Interest Group.

Between sections and interest groups, RUSA offers a range of professional development and involvement opportunities as well as ways to recognize professional achievements. A few of our sections went through reorganization and re-evaluated their award programs to ensure both kept up with changes. Implementation will commence after Annual 2024.